

Modifying your Home: Part payment towards Ministry of Health funded housing modifications

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Is it difficult for you to get in and out of or around your home because of your disability? Maybe your home needs modifications to help you remain in it, or return to it. The Ministry of Health might be able to help fund these modifications.

The type of modifications the Ministry of Health can help fund for your home will depend on your disability related needs and situation.

An occupational therapist who is a qualified housing assessor can meet with you, and your family or whānau, and look at your home. Together you can discuss how things can be changed to best meet your needs. This might include building modifications to your home.

The assessor can help you work out if you can get funding from the Ministry of Health towards the costs of those modifications. Sometimes the Ministry of Health can fund the full cost of the modifications to your home, but sometimes you may be asked to pay part of the costs.

What is a part payment?

The Ministry of Health may pay the full cost of modifying your home to meet your disability related needs or they may ask you to make a part payment towards the cost of the modifications.

You must make a part payment towards the modifications when:

- an income and cash asset test works out that you need to pay towards the cost of the modifications

and

- the proposed modifications cost over \$8,076 (including GST). This amount includes the cost of any previous modifications funded by the Ministry of Health after you turned 16 years of age. Find out more about the income and cash asset process in our factsheet *Modifying Your Home: Income and Cash Asset Test*.

You can choose not to have an income and cash asset test. If you choose not to, you will only be able to receive a maximum amount of \$8,076 (including GST), minus any previous funding for home modifications you have already received after you turned 16 years of age.

Who is responsible for making the modifications to your home?

Usually, the Ministry of Health's housing modification funding managers, Accessable or Enable New Zealand, manage the building process. This includes:

- getting plans and specifications (drawings) for your modifications
- arranging the building consent
- organising the builder and other trades people to do the work
- dealing with any problems or complaints.

The modifications must meet the Building Code.

You must talk with your housing assessor if you wish to change your modifications after the plans for those modifications have been finalised. The housing assessor, and Accessable or Enable New Zealand, will need to approve any changes to those plans before you can go ahead with them. For example, changes like, replacing a shower curtain with a glass shower door in your level access shower or installing a bathroom vanity unit that you won't be able to use are not likely to be covered by Ministry of Health funding.

Once the modifications are complete, the home-owner is responsible for the costs of any repairs, replacement or removal of items that are no longer needed.

Sometimes modifying your home may not be the best or only option for you. Maybe you should consider moving to another home that better suits your needs.

Ten steps to making a part payment

1. A housing assessor works with you to identify the most cost-effective way to meet your disability related needs.
2. You plan your modifications with your builder and/or designer.
3. Your builder provides a quote for the planned work (including work on the specific modifications recommended by the housing assessor, such as a ramp or a level access shower).

4. The housing assessor takes your builder's quote and talks with the Ministry of Health's housing modifications funding managers, Accessable or Enable New Zealand, to work out if you are eligible for Ministry of Health funding.
5. You must complete an income and cash asset test if the modifications will cost **more than \$8,076** (including GST). This includes the cost of any previous modifications that the Ministry of Health has funded since you turned 16 years of age. Work and Income, on the Ministry of Health's behalf, will work out the amount you need to pay, if any, towards the modifications to your home.

You do not need an income and cash asset test when the modifications are for children under 16 years of age. (Find out more about the income and cash asset tests process in our factsheet *Modifying Your Home: Income and Cash Asset Tests*.)
6. Accessable or Enable New Zealand gives you an agreement to sign that confirms that you will pay the balance of the cost of the home modifications.
7. You sign the agreement and send it back to Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
8. Once Accessable or Enable New Zealand receive your signed agreement, they advise the builder to start the work. They also send you a letter to let you know that everything has been approved and the building work is about to start.
9. Before the home modifications can begin, you and your builder or building consultant agree in writing that you will make your part payment directly to them once the work is completed.
10. Accessable and Enable New Zealand pay the agreed Ministry of Health funding directly to the builder or building consultant and you pay your part payment directly to the builder or consultant when the work is completed.

Things to remember

- You must agree in writing to Accessable or Enable New Zealand that you will make a part payment before you can be eligible for Ministry of Health funding.
- You must pay your part payment directly to the builder or building consultant after the building modification has been completed.

For more information about part payments

If you live:

- **in Auckland or Northland:**
contact **Accessible**
Freephone 0508 001 002
Email **info@accessible.co.nz**
- **anywhere else in New Zealand:**
contact **Enable New Zealand**
Freephone 0800 17 1981
Email: **enable@enable.co.nz**



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